

Dear Fellow Students,

In Fall 2005, I was a rightfully accused of cheating on a lab assignment. Another student and I had worked on a worksheet together, when it was clearly stated that it was an individual assignment. As a result, not only did I automatically fail the course, but I also ended up getting suspended for one semester from Cal. I cannot take any courses at another college or university during this period, as I will not receive credit for them here at UC Berkeley. This has also hurt my opportunities to actively participate in the university's variety of programs. I am not allowed to participate in any organizations on campus because I am not a registered student this semester. It was hasty and immature decision to cheat, and as a result, my life has been essentially put on hold for five months.

According to the College of Letters and Science, cheating is defined as "fraud, deceit, or dishonesty in an academic assignment, or using or attempting to use materials, or assisting others in using materials, that are prohibited or inappropriate in the context of the academic assignment in question." This includes but is not limited to:

- \* Providing answers to or receiving answers from others
- \* Using notes, information, calculators, or other electronic devices or programs during exams or for assignments from which they have been prohibited, expressly or implicitly
- \* Improperly obtaining or using advance knowledge of an exam or assignment
- \* Putting one's name on another student's exam or assignment
- \* Altering previously graded work for submission in a grade appeal

My act falls under the first definition. It is important to note that the student who provides answers for another student is as guilty of cheating as the student who copied it. As a student, it is your responsibility to complete all of your own work honestly and completely without the use of any external materials without consent of your instructor. These are the basic guidelines that are part of any course in an educational institution, whether it is explicitly written in a syllabus or expressed in words by the professor. In the Biology 1B course syllabus, there is a detailed section on cheating and plagiarism, and its consequences. This is a clear reminder for every student to think twice before they attempt to undercut any university sanctions.

Surprisingly, this mistake is made by many more people than you would expect. I have seen the stacks of files of student misconduct cases in Mr. Moser's office. The amount is quite intimidating. The punishments range from an F in the course to expulsion from the University. Cases of student misconduct are increasing every semester, and it's because school officials are making more effort in tracking down students violating the student code. They are simply setting strict standards for everyone to follow and abide by. For an institution like UC Berkeley, known to be the best public university in the world, it is OUR responsibility as students to hold and practice very high standards of academic honesty and integrity.

If there is anyone who realizes the importance of this lesson, it's me. My immature actions have haunted me all summer and will continue to for the rest of my life. Every day of my life I am reminded that I am not a student here right now, and this is one of the worst feelings to have. I am paying a big price for my actions, and I don't want anyone else learning the hard way like I did. I am no different than any one of you, and I hope you learn from the mistake I made.

However, in spite of everything that has occurred, I am glad that I am being given another chance—it gives me an opportunity to redeem myself by performing honestly and

successfully in my future courses at Berkeley. I owe my gratitude to the University because many students are not given a second chance

I realize the severity of my mistake and would like to apologize to Mr. Moser, my three Biology 1B professors, and the rest of the Biology Department here at UC Berkeley for my dishonest actions. They were truly immature and unethical, qualities that I feel I do not have although my actions show it. I have much to do to reclaim my self-confidence and redeem myself in our prestigious academic community.

Learn from me. I hope my example deters you from even the thought of cheating because it is simply not worth it. You would be cheating your instructors, fellow students, and most importantly, yourself. What good is cheating when you are risking your status as a student at this university, and potentially delaying or harming your professional career opportunities? I was not directly advised, and I certainly did not have this perspective before I committed these acts. The next time you are facing time constraints or are simply trying to find an easy way out of completing assignments, I hope you think about me and the consequences you may potentially face. I hope this letters helps all to realize the consequences of academic dishonesty and its effect on the individual, the university, and the community.

Thank you, and best of luck throughout this year and your time at Cal.

~ A Fellow Student